

SISTER NATALIE (MARIE PALAGYI) AND SISTER ALICE
(ELIZABETH SLACHTA)

JUNE 19, 1951.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to
be printed

Mr. FELLOWS, from the Committee on the Judiciary, submitted the
following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H. R. 1136]

The Committee on the Judiciary, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 1136) for the relief of Sister Natalie (Marie Palagyi) and Sister Alice (Elizabeth Slachta), having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

That for the purposes of the immigration and naturalization laws, Sister Natalie (Marie Palagyi) and Sister Alice (Elizabeth Slachta) shall be held and considered to have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence as of the date of the enactment of this Act, upon the payment of the required visa fees and head taxes. Upon the granting of permanent residence to such alien as provided for in this Act, the Secretary of State shall instruct the proper quota officer to deduct two numbers from the number of displaced persons who shall be granted the status of permanent residence pursuant to section 4 of the Displaced Persons Act, as amended (62 Stat. 1011; 64 Stat. 219; 50 U. S. C. App. 1953).

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of this bill, as amended, is to grant the status of permanent residence in this country to two nuns, who are natives of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The bill is amended in accordance with established precedents and provides for the payment of the required visa fees and head taxes and for the appropriate quota deductions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The pertinent facts in this case are contained in a letter dated April 12, 1951, from the Deputy Attorney General to the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, which letter reads as follows:

APRIL 12, 1951.

Hon. EMANUEL CELLER,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in response to your request for the views of the Department of Justice with respect to the bill (H. R. 1136) for the relief of Sister Natalie (Marie Palagyi) and Sister Alice (Elizabeth Slachta), aliens.

The bill would provide that, in the administration of the immigration and naturalization laws, Marie Palagyi and Elizabeth Slachta, upon payment of the required visa fee and head tax, shall be considered to have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence. It would further direct the Secretary of State to instruct the quota-control officer to deduct two numbers from the quota of Hungary.

The files of the Immigration and Naturalization Service of this Department disclose that Marie Palagyi was born in Budapest, Hungary, on November 14, 1909, and that Elizabeth Slachta was born in Kassa, Czechoslovakia, on January 15, 1896. Marie Palagyi and Elizabeth Slachta last entered the United States respectively on February 7, 1950, and October 13, 1949. Both aliens were admitted as temporary visitors under section 3 (2) of the Immigration Act of 1924, the former until May 7, 1950, and the latter until April 12, 1950. They are nuns of the Roman Catholic Church.

Marie Palagyi has stated that, while formerly a citizen of Hungary, she is presently stateless; that her father is deceased and that her mother resides in Budapest; that her basic education was completed at the age of 18 when she entered the Convent of the Sisters of Social Service in Budapest; that she remained at that convent until June 21, 1946, except for a 6-month stay in a convent in London, England, where she studied the English language; and that about June 22, 1949, she paid to an unknown Austrian the sum of \$500 to smuggle her across the Hungarian border into Austria where she entered a convent in Vienna for 3 months. Further she stated that on August 24, 1949, she obtained a non-immigrant visa from the American consul in Vienna for the purpose of coming temporarily to the United States as a social worker with her religious order; that subsequently she received visas from other consulates to enable her to visit other countries, while en route to the United States; that she left Vienna in October 1949, and proceeded to Zurich, Switzerland, where she remained at a convent until December of the same year, then leaving for Brussels, Belgium, where she continued her social work. She left Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on January 25, 1950, for the United States. After staying 4 months in New York City she went to the headquarters of the Sisters of Social Service, at Buffalo, N. Y., staying there until June 1950, and then returning to New York City. She has traveled considerably since coming to the United States, including two trips to Canada. It is her apparent intention to remain in the United States, if her immigration status is adjusted, and it is understood that she is now in New York City under the supervision of the Sisters of Social Service.

Elizabeth Slachta apparently was last a citizen of Hungary and is presently stateless. She stated that in 1908 she came to the United States with her parents and resided in New York City; that about 1912 she and her mother returned to Hungary, her father returning 2 years thereafter; that her parents did not become citizens of the United States; that she resided in Budapest upon her return to Hungary and attended the schools of that country, including a 4-year course in a college for teachers in Budapest, a year's course in home economics, and further courses in an agricultural training college for teachers. She taught in an orphanage school for 2 years and in 1922 proceeded to London, England, where she was employed in the Hungarian Legation. Sometime in 1930 she returned to Hungary and joined the Sisters of Social Service, and has served this order in Austria, Rumania, and Hungary, and in 1947 she was sent to China where she served in the cities of Shanghai and Peking until she sailed for the United States. Upon arriving in this country she had a Hungarian passport and an emergency document issued by the Vatican Legation in China. In the United States this alien has

spent her time at the homes of her order in Buffalo, N. Y.; Kansas City, Mo.; Washington, D. C.; and New York City.

The quota of Hungary to which Marie Palagyi is chargeable and the quota of Czechoslovakia to which Elizabeth Slachta is chargeable are both oversubscribed and immigration visas are not readily obtainable.

Whether the bill should be enacted involves a question of legislative policy concerning which this Department prefers not to make any recommendation. Should the bill receive favorable consideration, however, it is suggested that it be amended to provide for the deduction of one number from the quota of Hungary and one number from the quota of Czechoslovakia.

Yours sincerely,

PEYTON FORD,
Deputy Attorney General.

Mr. Mansfield, the author of this bill, appeared before a subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary and urged the enactment of his measure.

In view of the fact that similar legislation has been enacted by the Congress and, upon consideration of all the facts in this case, the committee is of the opinion that H. R. 1136, as amended, should be enacted and it accordingly recommends that the bill do pass.



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